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Identical letters dated 3 January 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Continuing our practice of periodically updating you on the most important events and developments in Syria, we should like to draw your attention to the fact that the Syrian leadership has spared no effort, ever since the current crisis began in Syria, to respond to valid popular demands, and that it promptly did everything in its power to adopt a comprehensive reform programme that is based on strengthening the national democratic structure, widening citizen participation in political and economic life, entrenching national unity, and ensuring public order, the security of the nation and the population, the stability of the country and the rule of law. Against that background, a number of measures have been taken with the aim of ensuring that Syrian citizens play the greatest possible part in that programme, in an atmosphere of tolerance and openness to all, including those who have made mistakes or perpetrated illegal acts, excluding involvement in acts of murder during the recent events, in order to empower them to desist from expressing themselves through acts of violence or law-breaking and become involved in the process of national construction. Since the unfortunate events began in the country in March 2011, His Excellency Bashar Al-Assad, President of the Syrian Arab Republic, has promulgated three legislative decrees which provided a general amnesty for prisoners that encompassed all detainees who were adherents of political factions. Furthermore, the Ministry of Internal Affairs issued several proclamations in which it announced that all persons who had been led astray and taken part in or been responsible for acts that are punishable by law, including security violations and the bearing of arms, and who gave themselves up to the authorities, would be pardoned, provided they had not committed the crime of murder. In addition, the Syrian authorities released detainees who had not been involved in recent events and on whose hands there was no blood. Set forth below is a list of the aforementioned measures:

1. Presidential legislative decrees concerning a general amnesty:

   - On 7 March 2011, His Excellency Bashar Al-Assad, President of the Syrian Arab Republic, promulgated legislative decree No. 34, which granted a general amnesty for all crimes committed before 7 March 2011.

   - On 31 May 2011, His Excellency Bashar Al-Assad, President of the Syrian Arab Republic, promulgated legislative decree No. 61, which granted a general

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amnesty for all crimes committed before 31 March 2011. Included in that amnesty were all detainees who were adherents of political factions, and half penalties for felonies, provided no personal claim was involved.

- On 20 June 2011, His Excellency Bashar Al-Assad, President of the Syrian Arab Republic, promulgated legislative decree No. 72, which granted a general amnesty for all crimes committed before 20 June 2011.

2. Freeing of detainees

- On 5 November 2011, 553 detainees were released who had been involved in the events, but on whose hands there was no blood.
- On 15 November 2011, a total of 1,180 detainees were released who had been involved in the events, but on whose hands there was no blood.
- On 30 November 2011, a further 912 detainees were released who had been involved in the events, but on whose hands there was no blood.
- On 28 December 2011, 755 detainees were released who had been involved in the recent events in Syria, but on whose hands there was no blood.

3. Ministry of the Interior proclamations

- On 1 March 2011, the Ministry of the Interior issued a proclamation in which it announced that all persons who had been led astray and taken part in or been involved in acts that are punishable by law, including security violations and the bearing of arms, or who had made misleading statements, and who surrendered themselves and their weapons to the proper authorities before 15 March 2011, that date later being extended to 22 March 2011, and provided information on the wreckers and terrorists and places where there were arms, would be pardoned and free of all legal consequences. In various governorates, a total of 8,881 persons who had been involved in the disturbances surrendered themselves and were released once they had given their word that they would take no further part in any act that was detrimental to the security of the country or the citizens.
- On 4 November 2011, the Ministry of the Interior issued a proclamation in which it called upon all citizens who were in possession of arms, or who had sold, distributed, transported or purchased or funded the purchase of arms, but who had not committed any murders, to surrender themselves and their arms to the authorities between 5 and 12 November 2011. They would then be immediately released and granted a general amnesty.

It would be highly appreciated if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative